

**REMARKS**

Claims 13 - 20 and 22 - 29 are currently pending with Claims 13, 22, 24, and 25 being the independent claims. Claims 22 - 29 are newly added by this amendment. In the Office Action, Claim 21 was rejected as being indefiniteness for depending from a cancelled claim. Claim 21 was not examined on the merits. As for the remaining claims, Claims 13 and 16 were rejected as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,519,180 to Liu et al. ("Liu"). Claims 13 - 15 and 17 - 19 were rejected as allegedly being anticipated by or obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,254,173 to Peer, Jr. ("Peer"). Claims 13 - 15 and 17 - 19 were also rejected as allegedly being anticipated by or obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,230,135 to Hurst. Finally, Claim 20 was rejected as allegedly being obvious in view of the combination of the Hurst patent and U.S. Patent No. 6,153,306 to Selin et al. ("Selin").

Each of the foregoing rejections is respectfully traversed and favorable reconsideration is requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

I. The Subject Matter of Claim 21 is Now Presented in Independent Form. ~

Claim 21 was rejected for being indefinite due to its depending from cancelled Claim 1. Claim 21 is herein cancelled and new independent Claim 22 is added to the case to place the subject matter of Claim 21 in independent form and incorporate the limitations of Claim 1. It is therefore submitted that the rejection under Section 112 has been overcome and that the same should be withdrawn.

II. The Claimed Invention Patentably Distinguishes Over the Cited References.

Once again, Claims 13 and 16 were rejected as allegedly being anticipated by the Liu patent. Claims 13 - 15 and 17 - 19 were rejected as allegedly being anticipated by or obvious in view of the Peer patent. Claims 13 - 15 and 17 - 19 were also rejected as allegedly being anticipated by or obvious in view of the Hurst patent. Finally, Claim 20 was rejected as allegedly being obvious in view of the combination of the Hurst patent and the Selin patent. It is submitted that these rejections are not well taken.

Applicant's claimed invention is directed to an extrusion coated lightweight web and to a method for extrusion coating a lightweight web. As the term is used by Applicant, a

“lightweight” web is one which is which has insufficient strength to allow the web to be effectively extrusion coated using conventional extrusion systems. It is simply too fragile. Prior attempts to extrusion coat such webs using known concepts/systems have been utterly unsuccessful, resulting in failures such as chronic tearing, overstretching, and other deformations, thereby thwarting the development of new, multi-layer film composites which incorporate such lightweight webs in a composite wherein the lightweight web is coated with an extrusion-applied layer, as contrasted with other processes such as lamination, spray or rod-coating, and the like. Extrusion coating has many advantages, but prior to the present invention those advantages could not be realized when it came to lightweight webs that needed to be coated. The present invention provides a surprisingly simple solution to what has been a very complex and seemingly intractable problem in the art of composite or multi-layer web constructions and, in particular, processes for making the same.

According to Applicant’s claimed invention, such a lightweight web may now be extrusion coated, notwithstanding its fragile nature, by using a carrier web together with the lightweight web in the extrusion process. The carrier web is a substantially heavier substrate than the lightweight web and is capable of withstanding the stresses of an extrusion coating process. The carrier and lightweight webs are fed together through the extrusion coating system thereby allowing the carrier web to absorb most of the stresses and other physical/thermal effects of the process which would otherwise be imposed on the lightweight web resulting in catastrophic deformations or destruction of the same. The extrudate is applied to the lightweight web to form an extrusion coated layer thereon, and the thus extrusion coated lightweight web is then separated from the carrier web. By this process, lightweight webs which were thought to be too fragile to be extrusion coated may now be coated using extrusion-coating technology. This is truly an advance in the art which opens up entirely new arrays of potential multi-layer film composite structures which heretofore could not be made or could not be made by an economically competitive process.

None of the cited references discloses or even hints at a process of extrusion coating a layer onto a “lightweight” web which is itself incapable of being extrusion coated. Neither Liu, Peer, Hurst, nor Selin discloses the use of a carrier web together with a lightweight web onto which a layer is applied by extrusion coating and the subsequent separation of the extrusion

Application No. 10/691,743  
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coated lightweight web from the carrier web. In each of the cited references, the substrate web which is coated is by itself. Since these webs can be extrusion coated by themselves, they obviously are not "lightweight" webs accordingly to Applicant's claims. If they were, they could not be extrusion coated by themselves using any process technology known to Applicant. And even if they were "lightweight" webs as Applicant uses that term (which they clearly aren't), they still are not being extrusion coated on a supporting carrier web as required by Applicant's claims. The fact of the matter is that the webs being extrusion coated in the cited references are obviously able to withstand the rigors and stresses of having another layer of hot, molten polymeric material applied thereto while under tension. The references plainly do not foreshadow or otherwise suggest the technology advance represented by the present invention which enables lightweight webs to be extrusion coated.

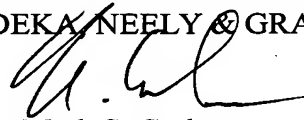
In light of the foregoing, Applicants urge the Examiner to reconsider the application, to withdraw the rejections, and to issue a notice of allowance at the earliest possible convenience.

In the event this response is not timely filed, Applicants hereby petition for the appropriate extension of time and request that the fee for the extension along with any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper be charged to our **Deposit Account No. 12-2355**.

Respectfully submitted,

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